JUST A PRISONER OF ROCK'N'ROLL...

THE JERSEY SHORE TOUR 87 — A POINT BLANK FEVER PRESS RELEASE

'LET FREEDOM RING' - A MANIFESTO

In September 1987, a determined group of intrepid travellers, disguised variously as tourists, drunkards, legendary rock stars, internationally notorious criminals and fanzine editors, set forth on an intrepid journey to the musical heart of America - the Jersey Shore.

Their mission - for such it is - disguised as a harmless holiday/honeymoon/ research trip, was no less a bold enterprise than to seek out, liberate and restore the prime inspiration of American rock'n'roll, the Diesel Poet himself, Bruce Springsteen.

How can this be, you ask? For many moons our best scientists, researchers, writers, authors and piss-artists have laboured to discover the meaning of the mystery of the Boss's secret messages of distress and anguish concealed in his lyrics and onstage pleas in recent years.

The first clue came with the words of 'Dancing In The Dark': 'I could use just a little help'. This mystified our experts for many a head-scratching day until it suddenly became clear in a moment of drunken inspiration. The plea for help, coupled with the extraordinary statement 'I just can't stand myself' onstage, coincided with the overnight transition of Bruce from a regular Jersey boy rocker to stadium-filling, platinum-selling, fan-shunning, bandana-wearing megastar/American symbol/political activist. Gradually the terrible truth of the situation emerged. Bruce was no longer what he seemed to be. In fact, he had been kidnapped - and cloned.

All the facts fell into place. Obviously the real Bruce was still producing the goods - writing songs, holed up in some dank dungeon by the fatcats of CBS, forced to put out demo after demo to fuel the public image that all was well - while his double, fiendishly modelled as an almost exact replica (except that they got his eyelids the wrong way round, and he would occasionally be caught playing guitar left-handed, as witnessed in many revealing photos) went on the road. Our guess was that this occurred just before the ill-fated Syracuse shows at the giant Carrier Dome in January 85 - deliberately chosen to distance the fans from a close-up view of the fake Bruce, whose plastic surgery scars were cunningly concealed by the everpresent headband.

The plot was almost the perfect crime: they married him off to an unsuspecting model after a so-called whirlwind romance, thus excusing his traditional accessibility to the public, saying he now needed privacy, especially in the wake of the phenomenal success cunningly engineered by the industry. The E Street Band, of course, schooled over the years to absolute obedience, never questioned the strangeness of the new Bruce.

The final proof came onstage every night when, due to an oversight by the clone's brainwashers, Bruce sent a desperate message to his true fans at the end of each show: 'I'm just a prisoner...of rock'n'roll!' This was reinforced at the last shows of 85 when he gave the impostor the message: 'Blind faith in your leaders - or in anything - will get you killed.' This horrified our spies who saw this as a final despairing hint - was Bruce in danger of his life at the hands of his captors?

And thus it was resolved to send a party of fearless heroes to that benighted land, who would scour the area tirelessly rather than give up on the maestro. Or at the very least, they'd have a damn good time looking for him.

Will they succeed? One thing is certain: if they can't, then no-one can. But their motto of resolution is unshakeable: 'Show a little faith - there's magic in the night.'